

the HURASAGI corpse delivery service

黒鷲死体宅配便

spin  
-off



raspurin

hiruko



misaki

MATSUOKA KUNIO youkai exterminator

松岡國男妖怪退治



tsuyama rakuroo



yaichii



noyuki ewatases



otsuka eiji 大塚英志 yamazaki hosui 山崎峰水

Hadokawa Comics A

This series is a spin-off/prequel to *The Kurosagi Corpse Delivery Service*, which has a fantastic English translation from Dark Horse Comics. Seriously, it's a great translation. We're fans of *The Kurosagi Corpse Delivery Service*, and if you're reading this, chances are that you are too. We figured that a spin-off manga set in the early 1900s would never get an official translation, but weirder things have happened. So if this series does get an English release, please buy it and support the creators, translators & editors.



MATSUOKA HUMID  
youkai  
exterminator



scanlation by  
SHIKIGANAI

# Translator's Notes

**02** The title of this chapter is 赤子塚の怪, which translates literally to "The Tale of the Akago's Mound." Before the practice of cremation became widespread in Japan, important people were buried under grave mounds. Many of these mounds still survive today, such as the gigantic "kofun" built in the 3rd-7th centuries to honor emperors and local rulers. But there are smaller examples as well, such as Kyoto's "nimizuika" ("Ear Mound") used to bury the ears and noses taken as war trophies during the Japanese invasion of Korea in the 1500s. Building a burial mound was thought to placate vengeful spirits.

"Akago" ("red child") translates to "newborn baby," but it's also a reference to a kind of demon described in the "Buson Yūkan Emaki," a picture scroll of ghost stories drawn in the 1700s. Akago are a type of frightening but harmless apparition that take the form of red-skinned infants. According to the story, you might wake in the middle of the night to find hundreds of tiny red babies dancing all over your house. You'll be frozen, unable to look away from the strange sight until morning.

**03** "Princess" (*hime*) was once used for any daughter of a high-ranking family (not necessarily just royalty). But most of the noble families back in the old days were related to the Imperial family in some way, so they were sort of royal.

**03** The Taira clan were one of four families that dominated Japanese politics during the Heian era (794-1185). The kanji for "Taira" (平) can also be read as "Hei", so they were often known as the "Heike" or "Hei clan." The Taira clan fell into conflict with their longtime rivals, the Minamoto clan (the Minamoto were also called the "Genji" clan, since the kanji for "Minamoto" (源) can be read as "Gen."). This led to the Genpei War (1180-1185), during which the Taira and Minamoto did their best to slaughter each other. The Taira were finally defeated at the battle of Uji, but a few members of the family escaped and continued to attack the Minamoto in later civil wars. So, the princess in this story is most likely one of the fleeing Taira survivors.

**04** "Misaki" is a term in the Japanese folk religion to describe supernatural beings ranging from Shinto gods to fox spirits, ghosts and demons. Misaki are said to be invisible to human eyes, but generic misaki are often depicted as foxes or wolves, similar to the weasel-shaped "kametachi" wind spirits. Although most misaki are minor spirits, they can be used to invoke powerful curses.

**06** Matsuzaka Kūrio (1875-1963) is better known as Yanagita Kūrio (since his wife was from a higher-ranking family, he took her name). Yanagita Kūrio was one of the first scholars to take an academic interest in Japanese folklore. He was part of an emerging movement among historians to focus on the lives of common people, not just famous people. He recorded folktales and legends from rural Japan in his "Tales from Tono" collection. He also analyzed the historical and linguistic roots of many stories.

Tayama Rokuya (1872-1931) later changed his name to Tayama Kōtarō. He was a famous Japanese writer and one of the founding members of the "naturalist" literary movement, which used semi-autobiographical novels to explore the realistic (and often darker) aspects of human nature. This was in contrast to earlier "romantic" literature that focused on beauty and pathos. Tayama's novels are known for having a rather pessimistic tone.

Tayama and Yanagita were good friends and members of the same literary circles in Tokyo, but they eventually had a falling out. Yanagita criticized Tayama's "predictable" writing, so Tayama inserted some snark about Yanagita's marriage into one of his novels.... bet you didn't predict that, Yanagita!



# Translator's Notes

**11** Matsuo is referencing the poem "Ich will mich im grünen Wald ergehen" ("I Shall Go For A Walk In The Green Woods") and the essay "Die Götter im Exil" ("The Gods in Exile") by Heinrich Heine. Heine (1797-1856) was a German writer known for his romantic, nature-inspired, folklore-influenced writing. Both Yanagita and Tayama were fans of European literature, but they preferred realist writers like Henrik Ibsen over Heine's literary romanticism. So Matsuo is making a little joke - the forest is so spooky that even he, an avowed realist, feels like quoting an overdramatic German poet. Tayama, whose commitment to the "naturalist" movement was much stronger, is not impressed.

## I Shall Go For A Walk In The Green Woods

by Heinrich Heine

I shall go for a walk in the green woods  
Where flowers bloom and birds sing.  
For once I lie down in my grave  
With my eyes and ears covered by earth  
I'll never again see the flowers  
Nor will birdsong break my silence

**12** Why are they calling their friend "S-kun"? Since his name is written with a letter "S" instead of a Japanese symbol, I'm guessing it's a nickname. Most likely, S-kun was involved in the same European-influenced literary circles as Matsuo and Tayama.

**20** The "Ryōujin Hishō" is a collection of poetry and songs from the 12th century that mentions "misaki from the northeast direction." In traditional Japanese onmyōdō (a form of sorcery that was practiced at the time), the northeast is considered an unlucky direction. For instance, evil spirits often enter a home from the northeast, and people traveling in that direction are advised to take a circuitous route to avoid going directly northeast.

**21** One of the most famous Taira actually lived over a hundred years before the Genpei War, though. Taira no Masakado was attacked by his political rival, Minamoto no Toku, which set off several years of brutal fighting between the two families. The battles escalated until Taira no Masakado attacked a government outpost, making him an enemy of the state. Realizing that he'd gone too far, Masakado decided that he might as well go for broke. He quickly conquered half a dozen provinces, and many believed that he intended to seize the Imperial Throne. Taira no Masakado's swift rise to power was accompanied by earthquakes, eclipses, strange lights in the sky, and other disturbances throughout the empire, so people believed that he had supernatural powers.

Finally, imperial forces caught up to Masakado and killed him, burying his body parts in separate graves so his spirit would never rise again... but according to legend, his head flew away and landed in the tiny fishing village of Shinbasaki, which would eventually become the city of Tokyo. There's a popular novel series called "Tōtō Monogatari" in which an evil sorcerer awakens the spirit of Masakado and wrecks havoc on Tokyo.



# Translator's Notes

**20** Taira no Masakado's daughter, Princess Takiyasha, is a popular figure in folklore as well. After her father's death, Takiyasha secluded herself in the ruined palace and became a powerful sorceress capable of summoning spirits to attack her family's enemies. So the Taira family had a reputation for being spirit users.

**21** Sae-no-kami stones like the one at Kurosagi Village are still a common sight in rural Japan. According to Japanese mythology, the father god Izanagi had descended into the underworld to rescue his dead wife, but he was chased by a terrifying demon. He threw a stick to distract the demon, and the stick transformed into the god Sae-no-kami. Sae-no-kami protects the spirits of the dead from entering the world of the living, and also protects against evil-spirits that might enter one's home. So, in ancient times, people would place large stones at the corners of their property and the entrances of their villages to symbolize the god. These stones could also be seen as a warning for outsiders to stay away from the village. Sometimes the stones are in pairs, symbolizing Izanagi and his wife Izanami, and sometimes they're even carved into the shape of male and female genitals. When Buddhism came to Japan, people began to place stone statues of the bodhisattva Jizo (protector of children) at borders and crossroads. So Sae-no-kami became associated with Jizo, and Jizo became a protector of travelers.

**21** Throughout the world, the number seven usually has some kind of supernatural significance, probably because the seven stars of the Big Dipper are one of the most recognizable constellations in the night sky. The world's oldest map of the constellations was discovered in Japan, and there are many legends related to the Big Dipper.

**23** Matsuroka refers to unlucky and lucky days of the calendar, such as "Koushin Day" and "sechiku" festivals. The Koushin is almost extinct today, but remnants of old Koushin beliefs survive in Shinto and Buddhism. Koushin practitioners believed that three worms resided in the human body, and that every 60 days, the worms would fly to heaven while the person as sleeping and report their sins to the gods. But if the village had a "Koushin Day" festival on the 60th night, the worms would be unable to make their report. This is very similar to the Chinese story of the "kitchen god."

"Sechiku" originally referred to five yearly seasonal festivals. Since cooking was forbidden on the day of the festival, people would prepare boxed meals ahead of time. These simple foods eventually transformed into "osechi," the lavish and elaborate meals that are eaten on New Year's today.

**26** Although fingerprints have been used as signatures for thousands of years, police didn't start using fingerprints for identification until the 1890s and the practice didn't become widespread until the early 1900s. So, at the time this story is set, fingerprinting would be considered very new technology.

**29** As part of the Japanese funeral ritual, the deceased is given a new Buddhist name so their spirit won't return if their old name is spoken. The length and complexity of the Buddhist name depends on the size of the family's donations to the temple. A simple name like the one on the woman's grave marker in this story would just use an alternate pronunciation of the kanji in the original name. But for a million yen or so you can get a death name written with ultra-obscure kanji that only priests can read, for the ultimate afterlife bragging rights.

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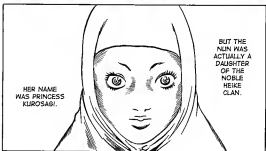
Chapter 4 The One-Legged God

Author's Notes

# The Tale of the Ghost Child's Grave



...THEY  
SAY THAT  
HUNDREDS OF  
YEARS AGO, A  
BUDDHIST NUN  
AND HER  
SIX FEMALE  
ATTENDANTS  
CAME TO THE  
VILLAGE IN  
SEARCH OF  
SHELTER.



HER NAME  
WAS PRINCESS  
KUROSAKI.

BUT THE  
NUN WAS  
ACTUALLY A  
DAUGHTER  
OF THE  
NOBLE  
HEIKE  
CLAN.



AT FIRST, THE VILLAGERS WERE HAPPY TO PROVIDE THE NUN AND HER PARTY WITH FOOD AND A PLACE TO STAY.



SOME OF THE VILLAGERS FELT THAT HARBORING THE PRINCESS COULD PUT THEM IN DANGER.



BUT PURSUERS CAME SEEKING THE PRINCESS, AND RUMORS OF HER TRUE IDENTITY BEGAN TO SPREAD.



BUT THE PRINCESS WAS WHAT THEY CALLED A "MISAKITSUKI" - A SORT OF MAGICIAN WHO COULD COMMAND SPIRITS.



AND SO THEY HATCHED A PLOT TO MURDER HER AND THE SIX ATTENDANTS!







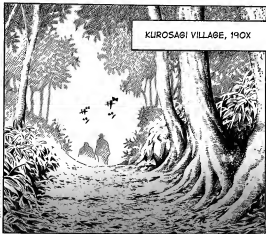
Chapter I

The Tale of the Ghost Child's Grave

第一話

赤子塚の話

# KUROSAKI VILLAGE, 190X



HEYAMA BOBOTSU. HE WOULD ONE DAY BECOME HEYAMA KATAI, A WELL-KNOWN NOVELIST AND THE FOUNDER OF THE "NATURALIST" MOVEMENT IN JAPANESE LITERATURE.



HA HA HA...  
AND I GUESS  
WE'RE HEADED  
TO THIS VILLAGE,  
HUN?



...AND THE VILLAGERS  
WERE SO AFRAID THAT  
THEY BUILT SEVEN  
BURIAL MOUNDS TO  
ENSURE THE WOMEN'S  
SPIRITS, THEREBY  
QUELLING THE CURSE.  
OR SO SAY THE OLD  
STORIES, ANYWAY.  
S-KUN IS A BIT MORE  
SKEPTICAL ABOUT THE  
LEGENDS OF HIS  
VILLAGE.

MATSUBOKA KUNIO; LATER IN LIFE, HE WOULD BE KNOWN AS YANAGITA KUNIO, THE AUTHOR OF "TONO MONOGATARI" AND MANY OTHER BOOKS ON JAPANESE FOLKLORE AND LOCAL CUSTOMS.



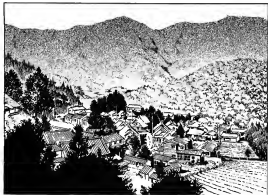


THE  
IRISAKI ARE  
ENSHINED  
WITHIN THE  
BURIAL  
MOUNDS...  
BUT SOME-  
TIMES THEY  
SLIP OUT...



SPR 023000







ONE: "HAPPY DAYS"



TWO: "GOLD"











NOTE: SHE'S DECIDING THE HEART RUMOR ONE OF THE MORE BLASPHEMIOUS...





SO THIS IS THE  
"CURSE" THAT  
PEOPLE HAVE  
BEEN TALKING  
ABOUT...

...WAIT A  
MINUTE! DO  
YOU MEAN...



ALL OF THE  
CORPSES HAVE  
WAS WOUNDS THAT  
LOOK LIKE THE  
CLAW MARKS OF A  
BEAST... BUT  
THERE ARENT ANY  
ANIMALS OF THAT  
SIZE IN THIS AREA.



...THAT'S RIGHT. THOSE  
SEVEN MURDERED WOMEN  
SUPPOSEDLY HAD A CURSE  
ON THE FOUNDRING FAMILIES  
OF THIS VILLAGE... AND  
SURE ENOUGH, ONLY GIRLS  
DESCENDED FROM THE  
ORIGINAL RESIDENTS OF  
THE VILLAGE HAVE BEEN  
KILLED.



SO NATURALLY,  
ALL OF THE  
LOCALS BELIEVE  
IN THE CURSE



OH, THAT'S JUST  
WHAT THEY CALL  
THE VILLAGE  
LEADER AROUND  
HERE. AND SINCE  
MY WIFE'S FATHER  
WAS THE FORMER  
BOSS, THAT'S MY  
JOB NOW.

BOSS  
...?



OH,  
THERE'S  
THE BOSS!

BOSS,  
COME  
QUICKLY!







WHenever these group-  
ings of seven rounds  
occur, the largest is  
usually designated as  
the "North Star" most  
likely, this is a remnant  
of the old star-worship  
cult that flourished in  
ancient times.

OF COURSE,  
THE MOST  
FAMILIAR EX-  
AMPLE WOULD  
BE THE SEVEN  
STARS OF THE  
BIG DIPPER.



SO WHAT  
OUTSIDERS  
WERE THEY  
WORRIED  
ABOUT BACK  
THEN?

...HMM.

I NOTICED THAT YOU HAD  
A SUE-MO-KAM STONE AT  
THE ENTRANCE OF THE  
VILLAGE... TRADITIONALLY,  
THOSE ARE INTENDED AS  
A SPIRITUAL BARRIER  
AGAINST OUTSIDERS.



...WELL, I'VE  
HEARD OF  
THINGS LIKE  
PEOPLE BEING  
POSSESSED BY  
FOK SPIRITS  
AND ALL THAT.

BUT...

SORRY, HE'S  
JUST OBNOX-  
IOUSLY OB-  
SESSED WITH  
FOLKLORE.  
JAPANESE  
FOLKLORE,  
WESTERN FOLK-  
LORE, DOESN'T  
MATTER.

OH,  
MATSUKA-  
KUN!

THE MOUNTAIN FOLK,  
OF COURSE! I BELIEVE  
THAT THE INDIGENOUS  
PEOPLE WHO INHABITED  
JAPAN IN ANCIENT  
TIMES HAD ABILITIES  
BEYOND OUR CURRENT  
UNDERSTANDING...







SPK. "SCRAFT"

*I'm indicative  
of compassion  
mediated  
in the face of  
"self",  
and found  
them all to be  
equally empty.  
And that this  
was released  
from suffering.*



WHETHER OR NOT  
YOU CALL IT A  
"CURSE" DOESN'T  
CHANGE THE FACT  
THAT WE'VE GOT A  
LOT OF DEAD GIRLS  
ON OUR HANDS.  
SORRY, CITY BOY.



AND  
NOW SIX  
GIRLS  
HAVE  
DIED.

THE FIRST  
MURDER HAPPENED SEVEN  
YEARS AGO...  
THAT'S THE  
GIRL'S GRAVE  
OVER THERE





HEY, CAN I  
EAT THE  
FUNERAL  
OFFERINGS?



AND YET SIX  
VERY SIMILAR  
MURDERS HAVE  
OCCURRED...

AS FAR AS  
I KNOW,  
THERE'S  
NO REASON  
OR REASON  
TO ANY OF  
THIS!



SURE, DO  
WHAT YOU  
WANT.



YOU  
WANT TO  
EAT THE  
OFFER-  
INGS...?

WHAT  
FOR?



...WELL, IF YOU  
DON'T WATCH  
KIDS, THEY'LL  
PUT ANYTHING  
IN THEIR  
MOUTHS.

THE  
FUNERAL'S  
OVER, SO  
THEY'LL  
JUST GO  
TO WASTE.





MM...

ARE YOU STILL  
OBSESSING  
OVER THOSE  
MURDERS?



DO YOU KNOW WHAT  
THIS IS? IT'S THE  
DEAD WOMAN'S HAND-  
PRINT. LATELY THEY'VE  
BEEN USING FINGER-  
PRINTS TO IDENTIFY  
PEOPLE IN CRIMINAL  
INVESTIGATIONS.



I GUESS,  
I GUESS?

THIS PROVES THAT  
THE BOY WAS  
TELLING THE  
TRUTH. DON'T YOU  
THINK THAT THE  
CORPSE'S HAND-  
PRINT CLOSELY  
MATCHES THE  
MARK ON HIS  
ARM?





WELL... I'M SO  
SORRY TO  
TROUBLE YOU  
AT NIGHT, BUT  
WOULD I SPEAK  
TO YOU FOR A  
MOMENT?

WUWANE...  
WHAT'S  
WRONG?



HERE  
WE GO  
AGAIN...

I THINK HE  
COULD BE  
ONE OF THE  
TRUE  
MOUNTAIN  
FOLK...



WELL... THERE'S  
SOMETHING I  
WANTED TO TELL  
YOU...



BUT S-KUN  
SAID THAT  
HE'D NEVER  
HEARD OF  
HER...

YOU'RE  
SAYING THAT  
THE FIRST  
VICTIM WAS  
KOSAKI-  
SAN?!



AND THAT'S NOT ALL...  
ON THE DAY SHE DIED, I  
SAW HER ARGUING WITH  
MY HUSBAND... BUT  
EVERYONE'S BEEN SO  
AFRAID OF THE CURSE  
THAT I DIDN'T WANT TO  
SAY ANYTHING...

I'M SURE IT  
WAS HER,  
THOUGH...



WHAT  
IF?



NO, TAYAMA-KUN, YOU SHOULD STAY HERE AND LOOK AFTER MADAME.

GUARD DUTY...?



OH, I'M GOING TOO!

...I SEE. IN THAT CASE, I'LL LURE HIM OUT AND CONFRONT HIM, AND MAYBE WE'LL FIND OUT WHAT REALLY HAPPENED.



YES... IT'S POSSIBLE THAT HER HUSBAND IS A MURDERER.



IT LOOKS LIKE THEY'RE GOING SOMEWHERE...

I SEE...



WILL YOU COME WITH ME, THEN?

ISN'T IT A BIT LATE TO TAKE A WALK?











SFX: <"WHISTLE!">



SFX: <"RUSTLE RUSTLE RUSTLE!">



THAT  
JUST  
NOW... IT  
WAS A  
MISAKI!

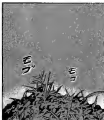


THE  
MISAKI  
ARE  
GOING  
INTO THAT  
BOY...





SFX - "BLAST"



SFX - "SCRATCH SCRATCH"



IS THIS...  
IS THIS  
REALLY  
YOSHINO-  
SAN?



S-SAN

YOU  
DIDNT  
KILL  
ANY-  
BODY..



THE ONE...  
WHO  
KILLED ME  
WAS...



BUT I  
JUST CAN'T  
BELIEVE  
THAT THE  
VILLAGE BOSS  
WOULD...

THE BLADES  
MATCH THE  
PATTERN OF  
THE WOUNDS  
EXACTLY...



THE  
MURDERER...  
MUST HAVE  
USED THIS  
TO ATTACK  
THE VICTIMS



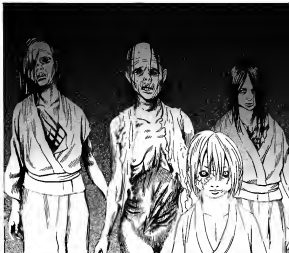
WHO KNOWS... BUT  
THE FIRST THING  
I'M GOING TO DO IS  
CONTACT THE POLICE  
STATION AT THE  
BASE OF THE  
MOUNTAIN AND HAVE  
THEM ISSUE AN  
ARREST WARRANT.

I DON'T WANT TO  
BELIEVE IT  
EITHER! BUT  
WHY ELSE  
WOULD HE HAVE  
A WEAPON LIKE  
THIS...?











BOOK -INTRODUCTION TO HYPNOTISM-



END





SFX: "SPURT"





NO... IT'S AL-  
RIGHT. IF  
ANYTHING, I  
FEEL LIKE I  
SHOULD  
APOLOGIZE  
FOR DRAGGING  
YOU INTO THIS  
MESS.

IT WAS NO  
TROUBLE AT  
ALL. BUT  
TELL ME,  
SASUYAMA-  
SAN... WHAT  
IS THAT  
BOY?



ARE YOU  
STILL  
THINKING  
ABOUT  
YOUR  
MOUN-  
TAIN  
PEOPLE?



IT LOOKED  
LIKE SHE'D  
BEEN  
STABBED  
IN THE  
STOMACH  
...

HEY, YOU  
SAW THE  
WOUNDS  
ON THAT  
YOSHIOKO  
WOMAN,  
RIGHT?



I'M SO SORRY  
ABOUT WHAT  
HAPPENED,  
S-KUN... IF YOU  
NEED ANYTHING,  
JUST LET ME  
KNOW.



I FOUND A  
SLASHED-UP  
BABY LYING IN  
FRONT OF THAT  
WOMAN'S  
GRAVE, SO I  
TOOK THE POOR  
KID IN.

...HOW  
SHOULD  
I  
KNOW?



IS THAT  
SO...

YOU KNOW, I  
DID HEAR A  
RUMOR THAT  
YOSHIKO WAS  
PREGNANT.



THEN IT'S  
POSSIBLE THAT  
YACHI-KUN WAS  
BORN FROM A  
DEAD WOMAN,  
ISN'T IT? IT  
WOULD EXPLAIN  
THE SCARS...



THEY RESCUED THE BABY,  
AND SUPPOSEDLY HE BECAME  
THE FOUNDER OF MY TEMPLE.  
HIS NAME WAS "TANGOU,"  
WRITTEN WITH THE KANJI FOR  
"SURVIVOR" AND "MOUTH"  
BECAUSE HE WAS SAVED BY  
THE SOUND OF HIS CRYING.  
WHEN I BECAME A PRIEST, I  
TOOK THE NAME "TANGOU"  
AS WELL.

...COME TO THINK OF IT,  
THOUGH, THE LEGEND DID  
SAY THAT THE MURDERED  
PRINCESS KUROSAKI  
WAS PREGNANT WHEN  
SHE DIED. AFTER THE  
VILLAGERS BURIED HER,  
THEY HEARD A SOUND OF  
A BABY CRYING FROM  
INSIDE THE GRAVE...



I THINK YOU  
HAVE GOOD  
INTUITION,  
SASUYAMA-  
SAN.

NO...



I'M TELLING  
YOU, WE'S  
JUST SOME  
RANDOM  
BRAT I  
PICKED UP.

SO YOU MUST  
WRITE  
"YACHI" WITH  
THE KANJI  
FOR "EIGHT"  
AND "ONE"...  
EIGHT PEOPLE  
WERE BURIED,  
BUT ONE  
SURVIVED.



SFX: <“WHISTLE”>

SFX: <“CHUG CHUG CHUG”>



THAT THE BOY  
IS ONE OF THE  
LEGENDARY  
MISAKI-TSUKI.